

THE ROUND TABLE

INSPIRING - INFORMING - CONNECTING

FINDING LEYKEY



At Camp'22, I asked Counsellor Leykey why he always looked so incredibly happy. This is his answer.

My dream is to empower Black Queer youth through education and technology. But I didn't always know this was my dream. For a long time I chased the idea of a life I thought was ideal for my well-being and happiness but in fact, was a life others had envisioned for me that I just chose to follow. When I decided that enough was enough and I started thinking about what I wanted,

everything changed. The three most important things to me are Black people, Queer folk, and youth. I would like to share with you why they are so important to me and how I am supporting them on my journey.

My love for youth comes directly from the opportunities and experiences I had as a youth and how greatly they have impacted my life. Without a doubt, I would say I am left-brain dominant in my preferences and skills. This was very apparent when I was younger so I steered away from almost anything arts based. I never thought I was "good" at it so I never enjoyed it. This persisted up until grade 8 when I discovered the MacPhee Centre for Creative Learning. They are an after school program who offer a wide variety of ways to be artistic and expressive in ways I never really got to experience before. The first semester I signed up, there was programming 5 days a week; music production, ukulele, sculpting, improv and African drumming- I was in ALL FIVE. Being at the MacPhee Centre, I learned the importance of diversity in your skills and how magical the world of arts is. Going back to the things I liked naturally, I noticed that there was a new enjoyment. I found ways to make math and reading more creative. This made me enjoy both logic and creative activities more by being able to apply my knowledge of both to either. I believe all youth should have the opportunity to try different hobbies and activities and I want to provide avenues to make that happen.

My love for Queer folk comes from the passion of my community and how support can change someone's life. I discovered I was queer when I was 14 and the only out queer person in my school. When you tell people you're queer there's typically one of two things that happen. 1/ They tense up a bit and their body language becomes more defensive, or 2/ They become more relaxed and have a sigh of relief. The first often happens because they are worried you may have a crush on them or might "convert" them, the second happens because they are queer as well and recognize you as a safe person. I started with one person being my safe person, and it made it so much easier to love myself. Meeting someone who is happy despite facing the same discrimination you face brings an indescribable hopefulness and happiness. I

want to be that safe space for queer folk wherever I am and as authentically as I can be.

My love for Black people comes from the hate I've lived through and wanting change for the better. It is unfortunate for me to say, but the majority of the hate I've experienced is from Black people. Whether it was for being Queer or "nerdy" it somehow justified bullying. For most of my life I felt a discomfort towards Black people - my people - because of this. But I didn't question where this hate came from, I just judged it for what it was. This changed after meeting Black role models who accepted the Queer community and truly accepted me. I really learned that the hate we give other people is because of things that we are taught or teach ourselves over time. If learning is what created this hate, then learning is what can create peace.

After I took some time to reflect and very intentionally thought about what was important to me, I discovered that Black people, Queer folk, and youth is what drives me.

The Problem was that my career path wasn't following this passion. I was told you must 'do this' after high school and you must get 'this kind of job'. And that made sense. Until it didn't.

I started wondering why I didn't want to get up out of bed and why nothing was moving me throughout the day. I wanted to know why life felt so BLAND. It was because I was living a life the people around me created for me, not a life I wanted to live. We get these markings of good or bad traits and start to build our personality of what we think people will like best, instead of what we like best.

I decided I wanted to be someone who supported their community and could provide for themselves while doing so. For me, that meant stepping away from university, moving out and starting my own business. To be clear - I love education and I believe that university is a fantastic path to achieve the career you're passionate about. I didn't know what I was passionate about, and it drove me crazy everyday thinking I might be doing all of this work for "nothing". I needed some time away, that looked like giving back to the community and doing work for the same organizations that served me as a youth. I believe that going back to the places that made me happy as a youth brought me so much fulfillment as an adult. Having the privilege to potentially inspire, or give support, similar to the folks that came before, has created a burning passion in me that is forever burning.

My name is Leykey Beals and I am a Queer African Nova Scotian. I attended Catapult in 2017 and to this day I will say it was the best week of my life. I was able to experience Catapult again in 2022, but this time as a Counsellor. At Catapult I learned valuable leadership skills like public speaking, problem solving, and team building. I continue to use these skills with my web development company 'StopTheLeak', where we focus on building the online presence of Black and Queer businesses, primarily by managing and developing websites for our community. Outside of StopTheLeak, I run a web development program and BIPOC GSA with the MacPhee Centre. It feels amazing to be doing what I love surrounded by so many lovely people.

Welcome Catapult Class of 2022! We were finally able to return to camp at Acadia and it was an incredibly energetic and exciting year!

Also exciting - our Classes of 2021 & 2020 finally made it to Campus! Their Catapult Plus conference was redesigned to include the best of PLUS as well as some favourite camp experiences they missed by being online for the past 2 years: our Catapult bus, SAFE, Amazing Leadership Race, Ropes and our informally, formal dinner. Robyn R '21 told us, "Catapult definitely caused me to be brave and more social –



and to also bring myself out of my comfort zone."

Catapult Camp was back to usual. Our campers faced their fears of meeting new people and formed 52 new friendships. They developed confidence by trying new things. Arin shared that, "Catapult helped me feel so much more confident and alive and that will give me more motivation to reach my goals."



Being A Junior Counsellor ... by Nova Nguyen '19

One of the most surprising things I found was behind the scenes - just how thought out and pre-planned everything was. Family groups are already decided prior to the first day and everything is done strategically to max out meeting as many people as we can.

Another surprise was that staff bonding is a big BIG part of the behind the scenes. For me, they were my biggest support system. They held me together that week and we also just had a lot of fun moments together. So I did not expect how hard the goodbye with my fellow staff would be.

I also didn't expect just how physically and emotionally pushing it was going to be as a counsellor. Every waking moment was spent doing something, there's barely a moment to rest for yourself. For the emotional part, it was like going through the same journey back when I was a catapulter.

For some context to who I was as a catapulter - I was the quiet kid and I really only interacted with my roommate, my family group, and of course the counsellors. I never really thought about the behind the scenes but being a JC really contextualized a lot of things I never expected.

At the beginning of the week I was so unsure of myself, whether I deserved to be there, could I make the most out of this, would I be liked, or would I be able to make any connections? By the end, it was much like my own camp where it all came together and I would do it again in a heartbeat.



As a JC, Nova's responsibility was to assist the rest of the staff in any way needed, like being a runner or helping with set-up. We also rely on our JCs to share valuable program input from their own experiences as a camper. Nova is a talented video-grapher so we definitely utilized those skills as well. Thanks Nova for all your hard work! If YOU would like to be a JC, be sure to apply in the spring!



Nova (left) with the 2022 Camp Staff



- including alumni Erika Pineo '15, Leykey Beals '17, Vessa MacNeil '17, Taliyah Brooks '17 & Victoria Goulden '12

SNAPSHOTS

TARELLE STERLING - 2020



School: Woodlawn High
Cool Fact: I'm a culinary expert. **Fave Camp Memory:** The 'Warm Fuzzy' story at closing.. **What inspires me:** My inspiration comes from knowing what I want to do and the effort that I make to accomplish it. **Future Plans:** Nursing & then cardiac thoracic surgeon. **Fave quote:** "The way to progress is neither swift nor easy" - Marie Curie

ROBYN RATCHFORD - 2021



School: Sydney Academy
Cool Fact: I joined our school's Activism for Women's group.
Fave Camp Memory: Skit Night
Future Plans: Doctor in cardiology
What inspires me: The people in my life inspire me to be the best possible version of myself. **Fave quote:** "Keep your face always towards the sunshine - and the shadows will fall behind you." - Walt Whitman

ARIN HEBB - 2022



School: Pugwash Dist. High
Cool fact: I'm a writer & digital artist! **Fave Camp Memory:** Rock Night - loved collaborating to write a song. **Future Plans:** Teaching
What inspires me: Seeing others succeed serves to remind me anything is possible if you put your mind to it. **Fave Quote:** "Your life is what you make it." - Eleanor Roosevelt

CATAPULTERS IN THE NEWS

Asiah Sparks '19 is now a first year rep for the Acadia University Psychology Association. Congratulations to **Nora Adham '16** for winning the Fall Shortboard Classic, Women's Open surfing competition! **Kayley Dixon '16** was invited to speak to Dartmouth High's graduating class of 2022! She is also now an executive member of the Environmental Society at SMU. **Sandrico Provo '09** was featured in an NSCC online news story about making a career change. He is now a software developer at REDspace. **Samantha Johnson '09** ran in the Potlotek municipal election! **Bilegjargal Narankhuu '18** (one of our 2 guests from Mongolia) says his experience at Catapult was so positive that he has chosen to return to Canada to study computer science at MUN (Newfoundland). **Peyton Arsenault '16** is playing varsity football with Dalhousie.

7th Annual Alumni Conference 10am-6:30pm, Saturday, November 26th Saint Mary's University, Halifax

Our Alumni Conference is open to all Catapult Alumni from years 2009 through 2020! Come learn life skills you likely won't learn elsewhere: money management and networking for success. We'll do a mental wellness session and then end with some social time complete with a Mocktail Reception and music. Both lunch and supper will be provided. But you have to REGISTER at catapultalumniconference.ticketleap.com/2022

Not available all day? Register for morning, afternoon or even just the social. Haven't seen your fellow Catapulters and nervous to come alone? Bring a friend!



PLUS'22 included a **Smudging Ceremony** for the first time! Led by **Indigenous Elder Billy Lewis**, Smudging is a sacred ceremony so we don't have any photos to share. Our students truly enjoyed this very special experience.



Smudging is a common tradition among First Nations. It involves the burning of one or more medicines gathered from the earth, most commonly sweetgrass, sage and cedar. Smudging is the ritual of cleansing the energy of a physical space, object or person. Plant leaves or stems are placed in a container and ignited (preferably with a wooden match). The flames are then gently blown out and the smoke is wafted over the person, either by hand or with a feather, to heal the mind, heart and body. We first cleansed our hands with the smoke as if washing them. We then drew the smoke over our heads, eyes, ears, mouths and bodies. These actions are to remind us to **think good thoughts, see good actions, hear good sounds, speak good words, and show the good of who we are.**

*THANK YOU
 Donna Marshall '12
 for painting this
 beautiful gift for our
 outgoing Chair.
 Ashley Doyle!*





TIME MANAGEMENT = LIFE MANAGEMENT

It's that time of year with another school year in full swing and you can't find the time for all the things you want to do. Each one of us has the exact same number of hours in a day. So why is it that some people seem to be able to accomplish so much more? The answer is simple - good time management.

Students (and employees!) have so much of their days dictated by school (or work). Juggling multiple assignments on top of clubs and home responsibilities makes it hard to fit in the social life you crave. Time management may sound boring and even restrictive, but the whole idea is to spend more time on the activities that make you happy.

Here's how:

- ~ Use a **PLANNER** so you always know what's coming up. It can be your phone, a journal, a whiteboard, whatever you prefer.
- ~ Schedule in all your **"MUST DO's"** in red font. These are the things you can't control and have negative consequences if missed or late .. like a math test or a work shift.
- ~ Next schedule in all your **"WANT TO's"** in blue font .. like a friend's party or favourite TV show. Dedicating time for relaxation and fun is important for your health and well-being!
- ~ Next is the step most people forget about - your **"PREP TIME"**. Examples of these are studying for that test or making a dip for the party. These things can often be rescheduled to keep yourself flexible.
- ~ Keep it handy so you can check and update it as you go, every day.

Got a big project or task that overwhelms you? Break it into manageable chunks and schedule it in over time. You'll do a far better job on it and it won't seem nearly as hard.

Use your phone to your advantage with its calendar and reminder alerts. But remember, your phone can also be terribly distracting. Social media apps are designed to steal your time and attention. So silence it and put it out of sight while working on a task!

Be very careful to not over-commit yourself! Saying no can be hard as we don't want to sound selfish or disappoint people. But if your planner is full, you won't be able to give your best. So be fair to everyone and say no. Don't feel you need to provide an explanation and don't lie with some elaborate made-up excuse. "I appreciate the opportunity, but unfortunately I am unable to commit right now."

Good time management will help you prioritize, reduce stress, perform better and be more productive - all of which will help you reach your goals.

Time management is a learned skill - so don't get frustrated and give up too easily. Keep at it until you develop a system that works best for you. We promise - it can be a life changer!



www.mha.nshe.alth.ca/en/tools

Online tools to help any age group with a mental health issue, eating disorder, addiction and much more !!

Catapultized 'Don't Stop Believin'

(Originally by Journey)

Just a counselor; Livin' in Dennis Hall, they did the midnight checks Goin' room by room.
Just a young leader, born and raised in Nova Scotia. They took the Friday bus going to Wolfville.

A camper in their stinky room. The smell of arse and cheap perfume. For a dollar they can wash their clothes, and smell of yum-um-my.

Chorus - Campers. Learnin'. All about communication. They are boundary breakin' with their fam-i-lies. Meeting people. Livin' just to find emotion. Hidin' somewhere in the night.

Working hard on football drills; Everybody's building skills. Paying anything to sleep in, Just five more minutes.

Some will scream, Some will yell. Some are in love with Dan Bell. Oh the PDA never ends, it goes on and on and on and on.

Don't stop believin'. Hold on to the feeling
Meeting people. Don't stop believin'. Hold on to that feeling

Written & Performed by Camp Staff
at Rock Night 2022

UP coming EVENTS

Contact Lori to register for an event.
PLUS workshops will be held on Zoom.

Sun Nov 20 7-8pm	Getting Involved - a PLUS workshop online
Sat Nov 26 10-6:30 Lunch & dinner included	Alumni Conference (for grades 12 and up).
Sun Jan 22 7-8pm	Personal Goals - a PLUS workshop online
Sun Feb 26 7-8pm	Wellness Focus - a PLUS workshop online

A special shout out to our volunteer bus chaperones Sam Dykeman '13, Chris Southwell '15, August Clarke '15, and Nova Nguyen '19. You are so very much appreciated!

If you'd like to pay it forward by donating to the Alumni Fund go to the Donate page on our website. You'll help a younger catapulter pursue their academic dreams! Deadline is Nov 30.

No one is you and that is your super power.



Wise words from Nancy Regan
Remove the "I want you to like me" sticker from your forehead and place it on the mirror where it belongs.

- by S. Jeffers

(Thanks for posting this one on FB Nancy!)

THE ROUND TABLE was named with Catapult's medieval theme in mind. King Arthur insisted on having his faithful knights seated at a round table where everyone was treated equally and had an equal voice. Use your voice and send us your submissions for the next newsletter!



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